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EMBASSIES FOR PAOS, IOS

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON TROPICAL STORM BETA, OCTOBER 31, 2005

**¶1.** Editorial in Tegucigalpa-based liberal daily "La Tribuna" on 10/28 entitled "Beta." "When we thought that 'Wilma' was the last hurricane of the season we found out that another tropical storm is coming with possibilities of becoming a hurricane. 'Beta' is on the verge of becoming a category 1 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale."

"The Permanent Commission of Contingencies, COPECO, has declared Honduras in 'green alert.' The forecast is that Beta will enter Nicaragua on Sunday and will cross Honduras, probably causing strong, heavy showers that will landslides. We do not know the intensity this natural phenomenon will have when it crosses Honduran territory and hopefully its transit will be fast and will cause the least damage possible."

"As previously expressed, so many misfortunes have occurred this year, between hurricanes that caused serious damage; the complete destruction of New Orleans, earthquakes and tsunamis in the Asian continent have not allowed that the

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world-wide attention to center itself on one of the many tragedies when another keeps adding up. Hurricane "Stan" left several dead in Central America and caused material loss, specifically in Guatemala and El Salvador, and the only international recognition received was by Queen Sofia of Spain."

"In Honduras the effects of hurricane "Stan" were respectable and even left dead, although the government considered that it wasn't a good reason for the president to return from his trip to one of the 'summits.' There is another pending summit in Mar de Plata next month, so we hope that this hurricane won't hit us badly and won't delay the president's trip. Let us pray that 'Beta' would be benign because the country would have a hard time to receive the necessary attention of the international community in case the damages are greater."

Williard